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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 32 | Min 19 | Humidity 32% Partly sunny Sensex 82,276 | Nifty 25,482 | Gold 1,61,212 | Silver 2,67,600 | Dollar 90.89 | Euro 107.28 | GBP 123.01

PRELUDE TO SUMMER

From full capacity in Oct 2025, water levels in K'taka's major reservoirs, including Cauvery basin, already shrink to barely 55%

PAGE 6

CRUCIAL STROKE

Changes afoot in Indian team as coach says focus on winning combinations; Sri Lanka crumble, New Zealand powers on

PAGE 7

City celebrates its seasonal pink party with viral social media posts, including IT professional's project mapping tabebuia rosea trees, but in sobering note, researchers say aesthetics aside, these are not the best picks for avenue trees

PINK IS ALL AROUND US

KAUSHIK JN

Scientists found mango, guava, honge or karanja, fig, green commiphora, and ankola trees most suitable for B'luru avenue roads

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Bengaluru is currently wearing a picturesque canvas look. Seasonal bloom of pink trumpet, also called tabebuia rosea, has painted the city pink.

While the brilliant pink bloom of the flowers has created a cherry blossom-like scene across many streets in the city, a young IT professional gave a unique twist to this colourful hue.

A 25-year-old IT professional in the city has mapped all pink trumpet trees across Bengaluru to deduce that there are at least 27,000 such trees in the city. The 'fun project' conducted using open source software and street map is now going viral on social media platforms.

"The pink flowers fascinate me,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 »

We are sure you have several selfies with the pink blossoms. Send us a few to our email mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com and we shall feature the best of them in our pages

"They should be planted along small avenue roads as the canopy is not wide. Moreover, since they are fast-growing trees, their root system does not go deep, making them prone to falling during the gusty wind season

— Dr. C Nagarajaiah, environmental researcher

... And yet, some are seeing red

As elderly pedestrian becomes victim of road rage over incessant honking; mental health experts point to deeper undercurrents

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A 41-year-old man was arrested for allegedly assaulting a 65-year-old pedestrian following a dispute over honking in the Nagadevanahalli area earlier this week.

According to police, the accused, identified as Naveen, was driving through a residential stretch when he repeatedly honked at the elderly man, Nanjundappa, who was walking along the roadside. Although the pedestrian reportedly moved aside, the honking continued, leading to a verbal exchange. Investigators said the situation escalated when the driver stopped his vehicle, stepped out and confronted the senior citizen.

CCTV footage examined by the police allegedly shows the accused attempting to strike the victim. Even after family members of the elderly man reached the spot and tried to defuse the tension, the accused is said to have followed the pedestrian in his car for some distance before stopping again and physically assaulting him.

In his complaint, the victim alleged that he was wrongfully restrained, verbally abused and assaulted without provocation.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Canvas of creativity

Internationally recognised visual artist Dr Akhter Husain presents Vedic Inspirations, a solo exhibition exploring India's spiritual and civilisational heritage through a contemporary visual language. **Where: Chitrakala Parishath, Seshadripuram; When: February 28 to March 8, 10.30 am to 6 pm**

02 Cultural tapestry

Atta Galatta is bringing 'Weaving A Story', a curated exploration of classical dance and textile through stories by Aparna Jaishankar, organised in partnership with Janani Murali, Bharatanatyam practitioner and Shruthi Kezhakepuram Purushotham, Mohiniyattam exponent. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: Feb 28, 6.30 pm**

03 Diverse designs

An exhibition jointly organised by Grand Flea Market and Indian Artisans Bazaar showcases Indian traditional and modern handicrafts, home décor items, and traditional attire from various states — all under one roof. **Where: Chitrakala Parishath, Seshadripuram; When: Until March 1**

04 Touch of jazz

Windmills Craftworks is presenting A Night of Gershwin, Hollywood Classics & More, a jazz and classical crossover performance featuring Lola (LOLA G) and Tomasz Bura. **Where: Windmills Craftworks, Whitefield; When: February 27 and 28, 9.30 pm**

05 Lost in the music

Indian Craft Brewery is presenting Saturday Night Live ft Iham Kavyam Experience, an electrifying evening of live music that blends powerful vocals with immersive instrumental artistry, promising a dynamic and high-energy night. **Where: Indian Craft Brewery (ICB), near Manyata Tech Park; When: February 28, 8 pm**

Concerns mount as thousands skip SSLC preparatory exams

Education department officials say efforts are on to trace students and ensure they appear for main examination, with direction to reach out to absentees and counsel their families

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With the SSLC examinations scheduled to begin from March 18, concern is mounting in the Bengaluru division, where more than 10,000 students skipped the recent preparatory exams. While the School Education Department has intensified efforts to improve pass percentages and push districts up the state rankings, the absence of such a large number of students in the run up to the final examination has become a serious worry for officials.

Across Karnataka, 38,677 students were absent for the preparatory tests conducted ahead of the board exams. A significant chunk of them are from the Bengaluru division, which includes Urban and Rural districts. Education department officials admit that tracing these students and ensuring they appear for the main examination is now a priority.

"We have made all necessary preparations for the SSLC examination. Instructions have been given to ensure that every registered student is brought to the examination hall," said a senior education department official, Belagavi, indicating that the department is closely monitoring attendance across divisions. In Bengaluru too, block education officers and school heads have been directed to reach out to absentees and counsel their families.

Officials say unless the missing students return to write the exam, overall SSLC performance could take a hit (File photo)

Officials say the reasons for absence vary. Migration of families for work, prolonged absenteeism from classes, fear of exams, health issues and lack of adequate preparation are among the key factors identified. In several government schools, teachers have begun door to door visits to persuade parents to send their children for the final exam. "Many students who missed the preparatory exams are irregular to school. Some of them are working part time or have moved temporarily with their parents. We are trying to convince them that appearing for SSLC is crucial for their future," said a senior education officer in Bengaluru.

Migration of families for work, prolonged absenteeism from classes, fear of exams, health issues and lack of adequate preparation are among key factors identified for students missing preparatory exams

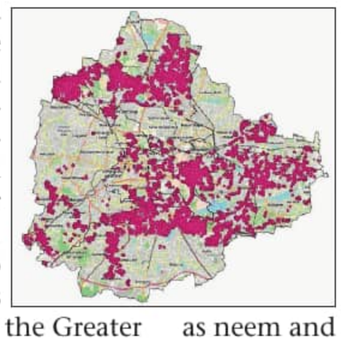
The pressure is particularly high this year as districts are aiming to improve their results and secure a place among the top performers in the state. Bengaluru, being a major academic hub, is under scrutiny to ensure better outcomes. However, officials admit that unless the missing students return to write the exam, overall performance could take a hit.

Education activists point out that exam fear is a growing issue among teenagers. "There is a lot of anxiety around SSLC because it is seen as a turning point. Instead of focusing only on results, schools must provide emotional support and confidence building," said a city-based academic counsellor. With just weeks left for the public exams, the coming days will be critical. The department is banking on coordinated efforts by schools, parents and local authorities to ensure that the over 10,000 missing students in Bengaluru do not drop out at this crucial stage of their academic journey.

Fun project maps trees across city

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and that led to this fun project. There are quite a few pink trees in areas where I work and live. I started the project to understand which other areas in the city have them," said Malavika Menon, a software engineer by profession, who used QGIS, an open-source software for geospatial data mapping. Menon also tapped into the ongoing tree census data being conducted by the Greater Bengaluru Authority for the location of these trees.



However, city-based botanists and researchers say that while the canopy looks at its best this time of the year due to Tabebuia rosea bloom, the exotic tree species is not a wise choice for city roads, especially wide roads, owing to various ecological and safety aspects. There are three varieties of the landscaping tree - Tabebuia avalanda, Tabebuia argentea, and Tabebuia rosea – in the city that produce vibrant pink and yellow blooms. While they are planted along streets and in parks in Bengaluru, for their aesthetic appeal, native tree species such as neem and ficus should be the first choice, experts say.

"Tabebuia trees serve a different purpose, which is mostly landscaping. However, they should be planted along small avenue roads as the canopy is not wide. Moreover, since they are fast-growing trees, their root system does not go deep, making them prone to falling during the gusty wind season. These trees were planted when social forestry was introduced in 1983," said Dr. C Nagarajaiah, former head of the Department of Forestry and Environmental Science at the University of Agricultural Sciences (GKVK), Bengaluru.

Experts also highlight that, given the high level of air pollution, avenue trees should be selected wisely based on their Air Pollution Tolerance Index (APTI) and critical ecological advantages. Notably, the Institute of Wood Science and Technology (IWST) conducted a study last year on the best avenue tree species based on APTI. Scientists found that mango, guava, honge or karanja, fig, green commiphora, and ankola trees are the best avenue tree options for Bengaluru.

KAUSHIK JN

While mango, guava, honge, or karanja trees were found to be best suited in the northern parts of the city, mango, fig, green commiphora, and ankola trees are more agreeable in southern Bengaluru.

This was highlighted after assessing the health of trees exposed to various human-induced factors, including pollution, in Bengaluru.

"Native tree species have various advantages over exotic trees. Native species such as neem, ficus, and mango provide essential habitat and food source to birds, mammals, insects, etc. Apart from environmental resilience, they also help conserve soil and water as their root systems go much deeper. Neem is also known to improve air quality by trapping air pollutants," added Dr. Nagarajaiah.

Infant loses fingertip in hospital mishap

A six-month-old infant allegedly lost the tip of a finger in a case of suspected medical negligence at Chinmaya Mission Hospital (CMH) in Indiranagar, Bengaluru, triggering a police investigation.

According to a complaint filed by Vijay Kumar J, his son, Balakumar V, was admitted to the hospital on February 19 for treatment of cold and cough. The child was discharged on February 24 after showing signs of recovery.

The incident reportedly occurred around 3 pm on the day of discharge, when hospital staff were preparing the infant to leave. As per the First Information Report (FIR), Anitha, the nurse, was removing the intravenous (IV) drip that had been administered during the child's stay. While cutting the adhesive bandage securing the IV line, she allegedly severed the tip of the infant's finger on the left hand.

Recounting the incident, Kumar, who works as an internet service provider, said the nurse proceeded despite the parents' request to wait until the child's mother returned to hold the baby. "She said it was not a major thing and that she could easily cut it off. She used a big pair of scissors to remove the bandage. Suddenly, my child started crying loudly. When the bandage was opened, the tip of the finger fell. We were shocked," he said.

The family claimed hospital staff initially downplayed the severity of the injury, telling them that the wound would heal naturally due to the infant's age. The child was later taken to the emergency ward, where a bandage was applied. Kumar said a plastic surgeon was called around 7.30 pm to perform corrective surgery.

"After the surgery, we were told the baby would be monitored for five days and reviewed again by the surgeon. We came here for treatment of a cold and cough, but my child ended up losing part of a finger. He looks drained, maybe due to the pain. This should not have happened," Kumar said.

The Indiranagar Police have registered a case.

Hospital authorities were unresponsive for a comment.—BMB

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No relief for man who set wife's suspected lover on fire

HC denies appeal to reduce sentence of man held for setting wife's coworker ablaze over suspicions of affair, says punishment must correspond to gravity of offence

The Karnataka High Court has upheld the conviction and life sentence of a man who set another person on fire over suspicions of an affair with his wife, ruling that the evidence clearly established his intention to commit murder.

A division bench of Justice HP Sandesh and Justice Venkatesh Naik T dismissed the husband's appeal against a trial court judgment sentencing him to life imprisonment and imposing a fine. The accused had argued that he lacked the intention to cause death and sought a reduction of sentence. The court, however, found no merit in the plea.

"On perusal of the material available before the court, it is very clear that the accused went to the spot with petrol can (bottle), match box, poured petrol and set fire on the deceased," the bench observed.

Emphasising sentencing principles, the court added that punishment must correspond to the gravity of the offence.

According to the prosecution, the accused suspected his wife, an interior decorator entrepreneur, of having an illicit relationship with the deceased, who had been working under her for nearly ten months. Witnesses testified that the accused had previously threatened the deceased and that a panchayat had been held after he began doubting his wife's fidelity.

On October 20, 2019, the deceased was standing near a tea stall when the accused allegedly arrived with petrol in a plastic can, poured it over him and set him ablaze. The victim sustained burn injuries and died four days later.

The High Court relied significantly on the dying declaration recorded by the Investigating Officer in the presence of a doctor.

The bench also found the eyewitness testimony credible, noting that their presence at the scene was undisputed and that no material contradictions were elicited in cross-examination. Concluding that the trial court had properly appreciated the oral, documentary and forensic evidence, the High Court dismissed the appeal and affirmed the life sentence.

Courts says evidence shows clear motive to commit murder, rejects appeal claiming lack of intention to cause death

Court questions bank officials' role in loan scam

The Karnataka High Court expressed strong reservations over the manner in which a cheating case arising out of a bank loan had been registered, questioning why no officials of the lending bank had been named as accused when the loan was allegedly sanctioned against a property that does not exist.

Justice M Nagaprasanna was hearing a petition filed by a man seeking quashing of an FIR in which he has been arraigned as an accused. The case stems from a complaint lodged by HDFC Bank regarding a Rs 2 crore loan extended to an NRI borrower. The FIR invokes offences under Sections 420 (cheating), 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating), 120B (criminal conspiracy) and 34 (common intention) of the IPC.

According to the allegations, the borrower obtained the loan by offering property as collateral, but the prosecution now claims that no valid property documents existed. The present petitioner, who later purchased the property and is said to be the fifth buyer in the transaction chain, has been named as a co-accused.

During the hearing, the court orally questioned how such a substantial loan could have been disbursed without the involvement of bank personnel.

When the bank's counsel suggested that the alleged collusion was between the seller and purchaser, the court pointed out that the very existence of the property was in question.

On being informed that an internal inquiry had been conducted, the judge observed that misuse of public funds warranted criminal scrutiny.

The court also noted the anomaly that the original borrower, who first secured the loan and sold the property, had not been arraigned as an accused, whereas the petitioner—far removed in the chain of transactions—had been implicated.

The High Court issued notice on the petition and directed the bank to place on record the steps taken against its officials and others connected with the transaction. It stayed further investigation insofar as the petitioner is concerned, while allowing the probe to continue against the remaining accused. —BMB

Residents seek urgent fixes for Sarjapur–Haralur belt

Various problem areas ranging from traffic to lake woes highlighted during inspection

Residents along the Sarjapur Road–Haralur–Kasavanahalli stretch have submitted a list of issues during a recent inspection visit by South Bengaluru City Commissioner Ramesh KN, flagging urgent concerns related to traffic congestion, pedestrian safety, lake pollution and solid waste management.

Vishnu Prasad from Kasavanahalli Development Forum stated that a key demand was the restoration and redesign of footpaths along Sarjapur Road, particularly from HDFC Bank to Motherhood Hospital and up to Kaikondrahalli. Residents alleged that footpaths on both east and south sides have effectively turned into parking lots, forcing pedestrians onto busy carriageways. They also called for missing footpath links near Kaikondrahalli Lake, suggesting rationalisation of the central divider instead of encroaching on lake boundaries.

Traffic bottlenecks at Iblur Junction and Haralur were highlighted as major choke points. Citizens urged authorities to prioritise solving Iblur Junction before considering an underpass at Haralur, warning that it could worsen congestion.

Residents also demanded removal of commercial ramps built over footpaths, eviction of vegetable vendors and mechanic shops blocking pedestrian space, and installation of bollards to prevent vehicles from driving onto pavements.

"Lake protection formed a significant part of the memorandum. Sewage inflows into Kaikondrahalli and Kasavanahalli lakes, garbage dumping and burning at Junnasandra Lake, and stormwater drain (SWD) overflows near RBD were cited as pressing environmental threats. Residents also demanded completion of pending rajakaluve works near Play Arena to prevent flooding," said a resident.

Kasavanahalli Road was proposed to be developed as a 'model road' with full drain desilting, installation of dividers over a 1-km stretch, three HRPCs in Kasavanahalli and four in Haralur, and continuous footpaths and culverts along the 3-km stretch from Kaikondrahalli to Choodasandra, which is already under tender.

Citizens demand coordinated action from authorities to resolve mounting challenges in area

Solid waste management was another flashpoint. Residents alleged that only 8–13 one-tonne vehicles currently service the area, against a requirement of at least 30 two-tonne vehicles. With a new tender still in process, they called for immediate interim measures.

The delegation urged coordinated action by civic agencies, traffic police and lake authorities, stressing that piecemeal solutions would not resolve the mounting infrastructure and environmental crisis in the rapidly growing corridor.

—BMB

Fire department to fill 1,600 vacancies soon

The Government of Karnataka has initiated steps to strengthen its emergency response system, submitting a proposal to the Chief Minister to fill more than 1,600 vacancies in the Fire and Emergency Services Department. Home Minister G Parameshwara said the recruitment process will be taken up shortly.

Speaking to the media after presenting the Chief Minister's Medal to eligible officers and personnel of Fire and Emergency Services, Home Guards, Civil Defence and SDRF, and handing over 40 new fire water tenders at the RA Mundkur Fire Training Academy on Bannerghatta Road, he stressed the need to strengthen manpower and infrastructure to meet growing urban and rural demands.

He stated that the proposal has been submitted to the Chief Minister. At present, around 1,600 posts are vacant and need to be filled. He noted that ₹329 crore has been allocated to the department under the 15th Finance Plan, with ₹98 crore set aside for construction of 21 new fire stations across the state.

Additionally, a request has been made to establish fire stations in 15 taluks to ensure faster response times. He said he urged the Chief Minister to approve setting up stations in newly formed taluks.

"We have constructed 40,000 houses under the Police Gruha scheme. On similar lines, a decision has been taken to provide residential quarters for fire personnel as well. Necessary funds will be allocated for this purpose," he said.

The Minister added measures are underway to procure advanced firefighting equipment and modernise the department's training centre. He noted that an Aerial Ladder Platform vehicle capable of reaching heights up to 90 metres has been inducted into service. **— BMB**

Protestors' plea: No fee, keep Freedom Park free

Activists concerned about plans to introduce fee to use first floor of parking complex, but official says no fee will be taken from protestors

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KAUSHIK JN

"There was a discussion to allow private organisations to use the first floor for organising book exhibitions and cultural programmes to generate some revenue for the maintenance of Freedom Park
– BCCC Horticulture Department Official

Murmurs that protestors may soon have to pay lakhs of rupees to utilise the first floor of the hi-tech parking complex situated on Freedom Park premises in future has created much worry. It is believed that the Bengaluru Central City Corporation (BCCC) Horticulture Department officials are preparing a proposal for approval to collect fees to use the first floor of the hi-tech parking complex. Social activists have opposed the proposal to collect any type of fees from the people who stage protests at Freedom Park in support of their demands. The first floor of the hi-tech parking facility looks like an auditorium and is meant for staging protests. It is said the hi-tech parking facility was constructed on the land meant for staging protests at Freedom Park.

"It is quite disturbing to know that BCCC officials are contemplating to collect fees from protestors for using the first floor of the hi-tech parking facility. The first floor, which looks like an auditorium, is suitable for organising protests during monsoon and summer. The then Mayor Sampath Raj assured us that the first floor of the hi-tech park be allocated for staging protests free of cost. Now, the BCCC authorities are contemplating to collect fees," said Gandasi Sadanandaswmay, president of Swathanthrya Udyana Vulisi Horata Samithi.

He said the officials are contemplating fixing the fees for utilising the first floor of the parking facility. "It is rumoured that the authorities have decided to fix Rs 1 to Rs 2 lakh as a fee per day for the first floor. It will be difficult for farmers, workers and others to pay such an amount. The officials have also decided to allow private organisations to use the first floor for organising book exhibitions and cultural programmes. I suspect the authorities took this decision to keep the protestors away from Freedom Park," he said.

Demanding the authorities to reserve Freedom Park for staging protests, S Varalakshmi, general secretary of the Karnataka State Committee of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, said the authorities must remove the sidewall of the first floor of the parking facility. "I am against collection of fees from the protestors for staging protests at Freedom Park. Protests should be staged at open places. The first floor of the parking facility looks like an auditorium. Protests are not staged in an auditorium," said Varalakshmi.

A BCCC Horticulture Department official has made it clear that there is no plan to collect fees from people who stage protests at Freedom Park. "We are contemplating how to make the best use of the first floor when there are no protests planned at Freedom Park. There was a discussion to allow private organisations to use the first floor to organise book exhibitions and cultural programmes to generate some revenue for the maintenance of Freedom Park," the official said.

BESCOM deploys AI-powered cyber threat monitoring center

In view of rising cyber threats to critical infrastructure, Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company LTD (BESCOM) has proposed setting up a dedicated Cyber Security Operations Center (C-SOC) to protect its data and operational systems. The proposal comes as the electricity board expands digital services, including smart meters and automated distribution networks, which increase exposure to potential cyber risks and vulnerabilities.

According to a recent tender, BESCOM plans to deploy and operate the C-SOC to cover both Operational Technology (OT) and Information Technology (IT) systems at its head office near K R Circle in Bengaluru. The total estimated project cost is Rs 30 crore. Officials said the facility will include a modern Security Operations Center equipped with artificial intelligence and machine learning tools to detect, prevent, and respond to cyber threats efficiently. Of the total cost, Rs 3.6 crore will be allocated for initial setup and licensing, Rs 16.1 crore for technical infrastructure and maintenance, and Rs 9.9 crore for staffing and manpower. A selected firm will handle implementation, including providing infrastructure, software tools, and operational support. The center will feature a video wall for real-time monitoring, analyst workstations, secure storage systems, redundant network connectivity, and a protected server room with firewalls and intrusion detection systems.

The C-SOC will integrate with BESCOM's existing infrastructure, including web applications, mobile platforms, cloud-hosted services, and internal networks. It will monitor vulnerabilities, unauthorized access attempts, malware activity, password breaches, and denial-of-service attacks. The system will also ensure strict separation between OT field networks and corporate IT systems, while using AI-driven analytics, threat intelligence, and behavioral monitoring to detect anomalies, automate responses, and strengthen overall cyber resilience. **— BMB**

New trains to ease metro crowding

With daily ridership on Namma Metro nearing 10 lakh and crowding becoming routine, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited plans to add three new trains to Purple and Green Lines by May or June. The move aims to ease peak-hour congestion and reduce waiting time. After months of delay, Titagarh Rail Systems Limited dispatched first train on February 18, expected to reach Peenya depot by month-end for assembly and trials.

Under 2019 contract worth Rs 1,578 crore, total 36 trains were ordered. Of these, 15 are meant for Yellow Line and 21 for Purple and Green Lines. Only prototype trains were delivered earlier, while remaining coaches are being manufactured in India. Newly dispatched rake, first among 20 planned for operational corridors, will undergo extensive testing, including 750 km night trial run, before entering passenger service. Officials expect induction soon improving commuter comfort and reliability during peak-hour operations citywide significantly overall. **— BMB**

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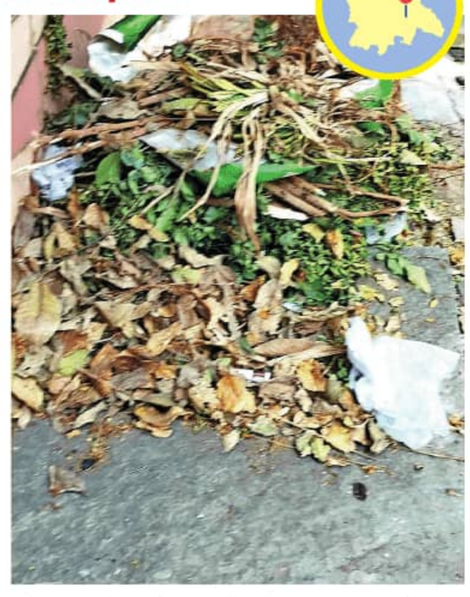
Road danger
Madhavan Park

Lack of proper pedestrian walkway at Madhavan Park Circle is forcing senior citizens to walk on busy main road, exposing them to serious safety risks and daily inconvenience.

Footpath encroached
Cunningham Road

Footpath on Cunningham Road extension leading to Cubbon Park Metro station has been completely encroached by hawkers who have erected permanent structures, obstructing pedestrian movement.

Garbage neglect
Bikasipura



Dry and wet waste has been lying uncollected for over 10 days in Bikasipura, with leaves piling up, it has become a dumpyard posing a health risk.

Outsourced GST workers arrested for impersonation

Two housekeeping staff employed on an outsourced basis at the Office of the Principal Commissioner of Central Tax (GST), Bengaluru West Commissionerate were arrested for allegedly creating fake identity cards, posing as Central Government officials, and extorting money from a gutka trader in Bengaluru. Police seized ₹5 lakh in cash from their possession.

According to a complaint filed on February 17, 2026, at Banashankari Police Station, the accused allegedly misused their access to the GST office premises located near the BMTC Bus Stand, Banashankari. The complainant stated that the two men prepared fake identity cards bearing the designation "Intelligence Officer, GST and CLTS" and approached a trader in Peenya, falsely claiming to be Central Government officials, and extorted money under the pretext of official action.

During investigation, police arrested the duo from a room within the office premises. Three fake identity cards and ₹5 lakh cash were recovered. They were remanded to police custody, then judicial custody, as investigation continues. Further inquiries are underway to identify possible additional victims and establish the full extent of fraud network involved. -BMB

CRIME FILES

Police mandate body cameras for passport verification

In a move aimed at enhancing transparency and curbing harassment, city police have issued strict directions mandating adherence to passport verification norms, requiring officers to conduct verification at applicants' residences and wear body cameras throughout the entire process.

According to the circular, jurisdictional officers and staff must visit the applicant's declared residence and complete verification on site. Officers have been instructed to collect information from neighbours and document credible evidence in cases where adverse reports are necessary. The order clearly states that adverse remarks without tangible proof, particularly those made to harass applicants or extract bribes, are strictly prohibited.

Police personnel have also been directed not to summon passport applicants to police stations under any circumstances. Verification must instead be carried out only at the applicant's residence after prior intimation through SMS or phone call at least 24 hours in advance.

All officers assigned to passport verification must wear functional body cameras from start to finish to ensure transparency and accountability. Supervisory officers must monitor compliance, submit weekly reports, and provide Action Taken Reports from all concerned units without delay.

–BMB

Short circuit suspected behind major warehouse fire

In a massive fire that broke out early Wednesday morning at a hardware warehouse in Kumbarpet, Chickpet area, panic gripped residents and traders in the busy commercial hub of Bengaluru. The incident occurred under Halasuru Gate Police Station limits around 6 am and was noticed by 7.30 am. No casualties were reported, as nearby occupants and workers were safely evacuated as precautionary measure.

Officials said the fire started in a three-storey building storing hardware materials and plastic pipes. Large quantities of plastic goods fuelled thick plumes of smoke that quickly engulfed the structure and spread to surrounding areas, alarming traders and shopkeepers in the congested marketplace.

Four fire tenders were rushed to the spot after alert and firefighters battled the blaze for over seven hours, finally bringing it under control around 3 pm. Authorities confirmed the godown suffered extensive damage but flames did not spread to adjacent buildings due to timely response. Preliminary findings indicate electrical short circuit may have caused fire. Police registered FIR and investigation continues into incident origins and safety compliance measures immediately afterward today now officially. –BMB

Campus storm: 20 ABVP members held

Sarjapur police arrested 20 members of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad after an FIR was filed over violence at Azim Premji University on Monday evening. Around 20–25 alleged activists gathered outside the campus, raised slogans, and forced entry, police said. Security personnel were pushed and assaulted during the intrusion. A first-year BA student, Mohammed Ali Ahmed, was attacked with a wooden pole and later admitted to Spandana Hospital. Protesters allegedly blackened the university nameplate and defaced boards with slogans. Police detained several suspects at the scene. All arrested persons are aged between 18 and 25. Investigation is ongoing currently under detailed official police probe. –BMB

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Head – School of Computing
Provide academic leadership to Computing programmes (CSE, IT, AI&DS, Data Science) with emphasis on emerging technologies, research output, industry partnerships and strong academic and career outcomes.

Head – School of Electrical Sciences
Lead Electrical Sciences programmes (ECE, EEE, EIE) with focus on academic excellence, sponsored research, consultancy growth, laboratory strengthening and sustained industry engagement.

Head – Defence Technology
Lead the M.Tech. in Defence Technology programme in collaboration with Defence Institutions, Organisation / PSUs and reputed defence partners, advancing applied research and strategic industry collaboration aligned with India's defence self-reliance mission.

Head – Robotics
Lead the Postgraduate Programme in Robotics, advancing research depth, intelligent automation initiatives, industry-linked projects and product-oriented innovation within an interdisciplinary ecosystem.

Head – Sustainability Management
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SUMMER IS UPON US

Karnataka reservoir levels drop to 55% ahead of summer

Seasonal decline, weak inflows and rising heat push reservoir storage lower, though Cauvery basin levels remain adequate for Bengaluru's immediate needs

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Water surges past the dam structure, highlighting current storage conditions as authorities prepare for seasonal demand and limited inflows

Water stocks across state's key dams are shrinking after last year's surplus, highlighting looming summer pressure while reassuringly strong KRS reserves provide short-term relief amid expected evaporation losses ahead

Water levels in Karnataka's major reservoirs, including the Cauvery basin, are dropping fast. From full capacity in October 2025, the levels have already shrunk to barely 55 percent, raising water security concerns ahead of the summer months. While the gross capacity of reservoirs is 895.07 TMC, they are currently holding 493.91 TMC, compared with 535.21 TMC during the same period last year. The live storage across the 12 major dams is also significantly lower than last year's stock.

Data from the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Management Centre (KSNDMC) shows that the four Cauvery basin reservoirs are collectively holding nearly 66 percent of their total storage capacity. Among them, Harangi stands at 39 percent of its capacity, Hemavathi at 55 percent, Kabini at 68 percent, and the Krishna Raja Sagara (KRS) reservoir — a key source for Bengaluru — at 78 percent.

The combined capacity of the four reservoirs — KRS, Harangi, Hemavathi and Kabini — is 114.57 TMC, of which 75.86 TMC is currently available. During the same period last year, storage stood at 77.82 TMC, indicating a marginal decline.

Experts say that with reservoir levels already around half of their total capacity, judicious use of water will be crucial to avoid shortages during peak summer. A city-based hydrologist noted that last year's situation was better due to exceptional rainfall, while the current drop is largely in line with seasonal trends.

Karnataka experienced near-normal rainfall in January with only a mild departure, resulting in no significant increase in reservoir inflows. With hot pre-monsoon conditions expected in the coming weeks, water levels are likely to decline further, though they remain comparable with the average levels recorded over the past few years.

Any substantial inflow is expected only during the south-west monsoon, experts said, adding that rising temperatures and dry weather will also accelerate evaporation losses.

Despite the overall decline, the relatively healthy storage in KRS is seen as a positive sign for Bengaluru's water security. With a total capacity of 49.45 TMC, the reservoir currently holds 38.64 TMC, which experts say should be sufficient to meet the city's requirements through the summer if managed carefully.

Officials continue to monitor the situation closely and urge citizens to conserve water wherever possible in the coming weeks.

TIME FOR A CIVIC SENSE RESET

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Based on the complaint and video evidence, police registered a case under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita relating to causing hurt, wrongful restraint, intentional insult and criminal intimidation. The accused has since been remanded to judicial custody and further investigation is underway.

Mental health experts say such incidents of road rage reflect deeper behavioural and societal concerns. Dr Sachin Baliga, Consultant-Psychiatrist at Fortis Hospital, said episodes of violence triggered by seemingly minor disputes often point to larger issues.

"Incidents of road rage, such as violent assaults triggered by such minor disputes, reflect more than momentary anger; they reveal deeper issues related to impulse control, stress overload, and emotional control. Urban environments, especially fast-paced cities like Bengaluru, expose individuals to constant sensory stimulation, traffic congestion, time pressure, and daily frustrations. Over time, this makes people develop poor stress tolerance, making them respond to minor events with excessive reactions," he said.

Dr Baliga added that personal stressors can further intensify such responses. "Additionally, underlying factors such as unresolved stress from family/work, sleep deprivation, substance use or any pre-existing aggressive personality traits, and emotional regulation difficulties also lead to stronger reactions. Some people struggle to control their frustration while others display aggressive behavior when they become upset."

He also pointed to broader social triggers. "Apart from this, broader communal and language issues, lack of civic sense and a general lack of societal empathy fuel further escalation, taking it into unnecessary and disturbing directions."

Calling such episodes a wider mental health concern, he said preventive strategies are essential. "These incidents signal a broader mental health concern. Simple strategies such as conscious breathing while driving, allowing buffer time to reduce urgency, avoiding retaliatory gestures, and practising perspective-taking can significantly reduce escalation."

He emphasised that individual responsibility plays a key role. "These incidents demonstrate that there is a larger mental health concern which needs to be addressed. It highlights the urgent need for stress management, emotional awareness, and responsible civic behaviour. Simple strategies such as conscious breathing while driving, allowing buffer time to reduce urgency, avoiding retaliatory gestures, and the practice of understanding different perspectives leads to major de-escalation results. Lastly, all of us need to take a step back and re-calibrate our basic civic sense and human empathy. Because at the end of the day when things go bad, everyone loses," he explained.

One local resident remarked that repeated honking and impatience from drivers make pedestrians feel unsafe. "People sometimes honk even when there's plenty of room; it creates tension," the person said, adding that more awareness about sharing space respectfully could help. Another commuter described witnessing similar aggressive encounters on busy stretches, saying that unnecessary honking and confrontations have become worryingly common.

Training empowers police to protect children

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

A comprehensive training programme for officers of the Special Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU) from the Eastern Division was held on Wednesday, focusing on strengthening child-friendly policing and enhancing understanding of child protection laws and procedures. The session was organised by Parihar and brought together more than 100 SJPU officers for an intensive and interactive learning experience.

The training featured noted child rights activist Nagasimha G Rao and advocate Anjali Ramanna as key resource persons. The sessions covered critical legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms related to child protection, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. Officers were also briefed on the role and functioning of Child Welfare Committees and best practices for handling child-related cases sensitively and in compliance with legal provisions.

Eastern Zone Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Geetha coordinated and conducted the programme, ensuring smooth execution and active engagement from participants. Representatives from Parihar, Bindiya and Chaitra, were present throughout the session to facilitate discussions and support the proceedings. The training included interactive segments where officers raised practical challenges they encountered in the field, enabling experts to provide clarifications and guidance.

Speaking on the occasion, Nagasimha G Rao emphasised that SJPUs carry the greatest responsibility for protecting children and ensuring their social security at the police station level. He said every SJPU officer must adopt a child-friendly approach and highlighted the need for continuous and regular training on child psychology, legal provisions, and procedures to build trust with children and handle cases with sensitivity and effectiveness. He added that consistent capacity building is essential for SJPUs to truly serve as guardians who prioritise children's welfare, dignity, and rights.

Anjali Ramanna, Women and Juvenile Rights Advocate, noted that such capacity-building initiatives are crucial and deserve appreciation. She said these sessions not only equip officers with knowledge but also provide an opportunity for stakeholders involved in policy making to understand the real challenges faced by SJPUs in implementing child welfare laws and programmes. Understanding these ground realities, she added, helps policymakers and lawmakers make more practical amendments to laws and procedures.

The initiative underscores ongoing efforts to strengthen inter-agency collaboration and promote child-sensitive policing practices across the region.

Team recovers from poor start to defeat Sri Lanka by 61 runs

KIWIS GET BACK UP, KNOCK CO-HOSTS OUT

New Zealand recovered from a poor start to crush Sri Lanka by 61 runs in the Twenty20 World Cup Super Eights and eliminate the co-hosts from the tournament on Wednesday.

Mitchell Santner led New Zealand's recovery with a captain's knock of 47 off 26 balls after coming in with his side in huge trouble at 84-5 to power them to a competitive 168-7 after being put into bat at the R Premadasa Stadium.

Sri Lanka managed 107-8 in reply, never recovering from a top-order collapse to succumb to their second defeat in the Super Eight stage of the 20-team tournament.

Rachin Ravindra (4-27) and Matt Henry (2-3) impressed with the ball for New Zealand.

1. New Zealand's Tim Seifert stumps out Sri Lanka's Pavan Rathnayake; **2.**New Zealand's Rachin Ravindra celebrates after taking the wicket of Sri Lanka's captain Dasun Shanaka **3.**Sri Lanka's captain Dasun Shanaka (L) reacts as he sits in the team dug-out

New Zealand
168/7
(20)

Sri Lanka
107/8
(20)

Today's match

West Indies V/S South Africa
03.00 pm

India V/S Zimbabwe
07.00 pm

India eye team changes for crucial Zimbabwe clash

India wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson will be under consideration for Thursday's Twenty20 World Cup game against Zimbabwe as the team look to reshuffle their side, batting coach Sitanshu Kotak said ahead of the must-win match. Kotak admitted India had played their "worst game in two years" in the 76-run loss to South Africa on Sunday but stressed the need to focus on combinations who could yield the best results rather than dwelling on pressure.

"There can be changes, yes. And obviously, it goes without saying that we discussed, because there are two lefty openers, number three is left-handed and opposition's bowling off-spin," Kotak told reporters on Wednesday.

"Because in the three games, we lost a wicket in the first over, obviously any team would think. So we are thinking and we will see how it goes because we never decide the team too early.

"Definitely there will be thought about playing him (Samson), there is no doubt. But nets don't give any indication."

Despite the setback, Kotak said India, who need to win their remaining two matches in the Super Eight to stay in the hunt for a semi-final place, would stick to their aggressive approach.

"We have to be very positive and play the same brand of cricket which has given us the success and clearly that is the way we will play, there will not be any difference," he said.

Samson could provide a spark to India's opening partnership, with Abhishek Sharma struggling for form after recording three ducks from four appearances.

However, Kotak backed the under-fire opener, attributing his poor run to health issues.

"His health was a bit bad. And then after that, he didn't have that much momentum. But last game, he looked good," Kotak said.

"So our job is to keep him in a good frame of mind and once he starts hitting the ball again, you will see the same Abhishek again, there is no doubt."

India will be boosted by the return of finisher Rinku Singh, who flew home due to a family emergency.

"Rinku, his father wasn't well so he went back and I think he is coming back today evening. So, hopefully he will be back today evening," Kotak said. **-Reuters**

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I, Sathyam Tripati R/o No 20 Narasimha Layout Hanumantdham Jyothi Nagar Nelamangala Bengaluru Rural 562123 have changed my name Satyam Tripati for all Purposes

I Choudhary Khushboo Premaramji W/O, Bhawarlal Choudhary R/o N0-133,anjaneya Temple Street, cubbonpet, bengaluru-560002 have changed my name to Choudhary Khusboo Pemaramji.

I, Jhanani KK D/O, Kalyana Varadharajan R/o HSR Layout,Sector-2, Parangipalya, Bengaluru - 560102 have changed my name to Jhanani Hariprasauth for all purposes.

I PRAVEEN KUMAR SUTRAVE AMARNATH R/O No 14,4th Floor 402,Nirvana 2 Apartment,1st Cross, Vinayaka Nagara,Bengaluru -560017.I Have Changed my Name To PRAVEEN KUMAR SUTRAVE Vide Affidavit Dated: 23/02/2026 before Notary K.V.Mani Bengaluru.

I, Dhamya. K S. Resident NO 307, B Block, Sls Sarovar, Mv Layout, Thindlu Main Road, Vidyaranyapura, Bengaluru-560097.Changed My Name From Dhamya. V S (V S Full Form is Vaterira Subbaiah) To Dhamya. K S (K S Full Form is Kanathanda Somanna) to all further purposes. (Reference Date of Birth 16/07/1987).

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I, SUDHATAI HUBLIKAR, residing at Poineer KRS Park Royal Apartment D Wing Flat No.206, Sy No. 54, Forest Layout, Behind Shanthi Sadana, Near Pattanagere Metro Station, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560098,I have changed my name to SAVITA BENGERI vide affidavit dated : 23/02/2026 Before Notary N Sandhya

I, Aamina Banu Fakrudeen W/o Fakrudeen Zafarulla Khan R/o B-1401, Eta the Gardens, magadi Road, bengaluru-560023 Have Changed My Name to Aamina Banu Sulaiman for All Purposes.

I, Yasmin W/o L. Santhosh Kumar R/o 52/1, K. No. 2/1, Gayatri Consciousness Center, Chikka Begur Industrial Layout, Begur, Bommanahalli, B'lore-560068 have changed my name to Sanvi Bai .

I, Upendra Reddimasi S/o Reddimasi Malleshappa, #MR 34 SFHS, 1st Main,8th Cross, N S Palya, BTM 2nd Stage, Bengaluru 560076 , have changed my name to Upendra Reddymasi s/o Reddymasi Malleshappa for all purpose

I, Naresh Kumar Jain Sohanlal Jain , R/o No 46/1 Flat No 201 P Kalinga Rao Road Mission Road Cross Bengaluru 560027 Have Changed My Name to Naresh Kumar Jain Sohanlal for All Purposes.

I Abhishek Gowda S/O, Jayaprakasha M R/o N0-37/a,near Lrde,suddugunte Palya,c V Raman Nagar,bengaluru-560093 have changed my name to Abhishek Gowda Jayaprakasha.

I, Suneetha Nandeesh R/o Flat. 211, Prashanthi Sarovara, Beml 3rd stage, R R nagar, Bengaluru 560098 have changed my name to Suneetha Nekar Devendrappa (N D Suneetha) I shall be called by this name for all purposes

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APR: 7, 13*, 14, 20*, 21, 27*, 28, MAY: 5, 12
NEPAL WITH MUKHINATH 13 DAYS: MAR: 5 APR: 2, 23
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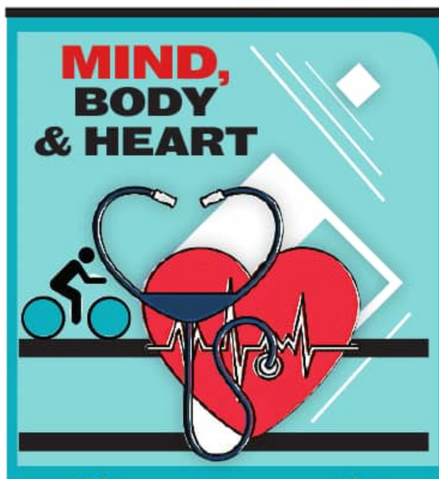

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Healthier snacking

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A small handful of almonds, cashews, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds is one of the simplest energy boosters. These foods deliver healthy fats, protein and key minerals like magnesium and zinc that help fight fatigue. As experts note, nuts and seeds support steady energy release and help you stay full longer.

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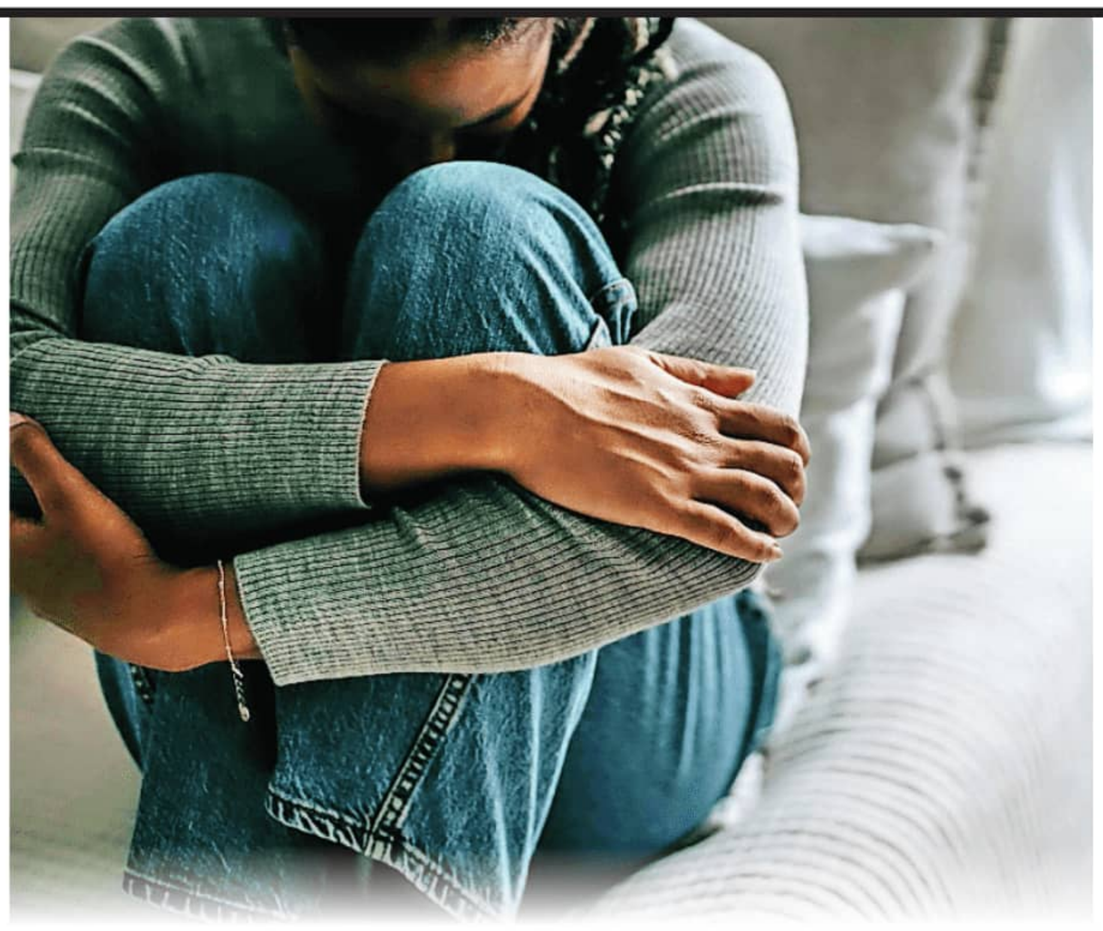
Light, crunchy and satisfying, roasted makhana is an underrated hero. It is light, low in calories, and satisfies hunger without making you feel heavy. Its low glycaemic nature makes it ideal for avoiding sudden energy dips during busy workdays.
Roasted chana
Roasted chana is affordable, portable and power-packed with plant protein and fibre. According to experts, it is an excellent low-glycaemic snack that promotes fullness without energy fluctuations. Keep a small jar at your desk for emergency hunger moments.

Boiled eggs
When you need serious staying power, boiled eggs deliver. Rich in high-quality protein and vitamins, they support energy metabolism and mental focus. One or two eggs in the afternoon can prevent the urge to binge on less nutritious options later.

Dark chocolate
Yes, chocolate can help if you choose it wisely. A small portion of dark chocolate contains antioxidants and magnesium that may enhance mood and concentration. The key is moderation and choosing at least 70 per cent cocoa to avoid excess sugar.



MATTER OF PAIN

Pain may last longer for women than men and immune cells may be the reason why

Pain is something most people experience after an injury, whether from a sprained ankle, surgery or car accident. Normally pain fades as the body heals. But it may last longer in women than in men, making women more likely to develop chronic pain.

For decades, differences in pain between men and women have often been attributed to psychological, emotional or social factors. Because of that, persistent pain in women is often overlooked in care.

However, my research team's newly published study suggests that the immune system may play a role in why recovery from pain differs in men and women. Doctors have thought that the immune system increases pain by causing inflammation, which is often experienced as redness and swelling.

But recent work from my lab and others suggests that immune cells may also be critical to helping pain resolve, and differences in how these cells function between men and women may influence how quickly pain goes away.

Hormones and immune cells

I am a neuroimmunologist who studies how the nervous and immune systems communicate. My research team aims to understand why pain sometimes persists long after an injury has healed, eventually becoming chronic.

To study this process, we combined experiments in mice with data from people who had been involved in motor vehicle collisions. This type of injury is a common trigger for long-term musculoskeletal pain, making it an ideal situation to study how acute pain becomes chronic.

We focused on a specific molecule called interleukin-10 that helps reduce inflammation, measuring its levels in both mice after skin injury and in people in the emergency room after a motor vehicle accident. Surprisingly, we found that IL-10 doesn't just calm inflammation. It also communicates directly to pain-sensing nerve cells to switch them off. In other words, IL-10 helps pain to go away.

We identified that IL-10 was mostly produced by a type of immune cell called monocytes that circulate in the blood and travel to injured tissues.

Across both mice and humans, we found that males tended to recover from pain more quickly than females. The reason appears to lie in how monocytes behave after injury. In males, these immune cells were more likely to produce IL-10, the molecule that helps resolve pain. In females, this response was less pronounced.

Importantly, we also found that testosterone influences how much IL-10 these immune cells produce. Higher levels of testosterone in males promoted higher production of IL-10 by monocytes. This finding suggests that hormonal signals may shape the body's ability to naturally turn off pain after injury.

Avenues for treatment

Our results point to a shift in how scientists think about pain: Rather than viewing the immune system only as a driver of pain, it may also be a key player in resolving it. Differences in immune cell function could explain why some people recover quicker from injury while others go on to develop chronic pain.

Understanding these biological pathways could eventually lead to new treatments. Instead of simply blocking pain signals, future therapies might aim to boost the body's own pain resolution system. Helping immune cells calm down pain-sensing neurons more effectively could more quickly restore comfort after injury.

While more research is needed, these results highlight a promising new direction in the effort to prevent and treat chronic pain and better understand sex differences in pain.

(By Geoffroy Laumet, Michigan State University, The Conversation)

MIRRORLIGHTS

'Probably' does not mean the same thing to AI as it does to you

When a human says an event is "probable" or "likely," people generally have a shared, if fuzzy, understanding of what that means. But when an AI chatbot like ChatGPT uses the same word, it's not assessing the odds the way we do, my colleagues and I found.

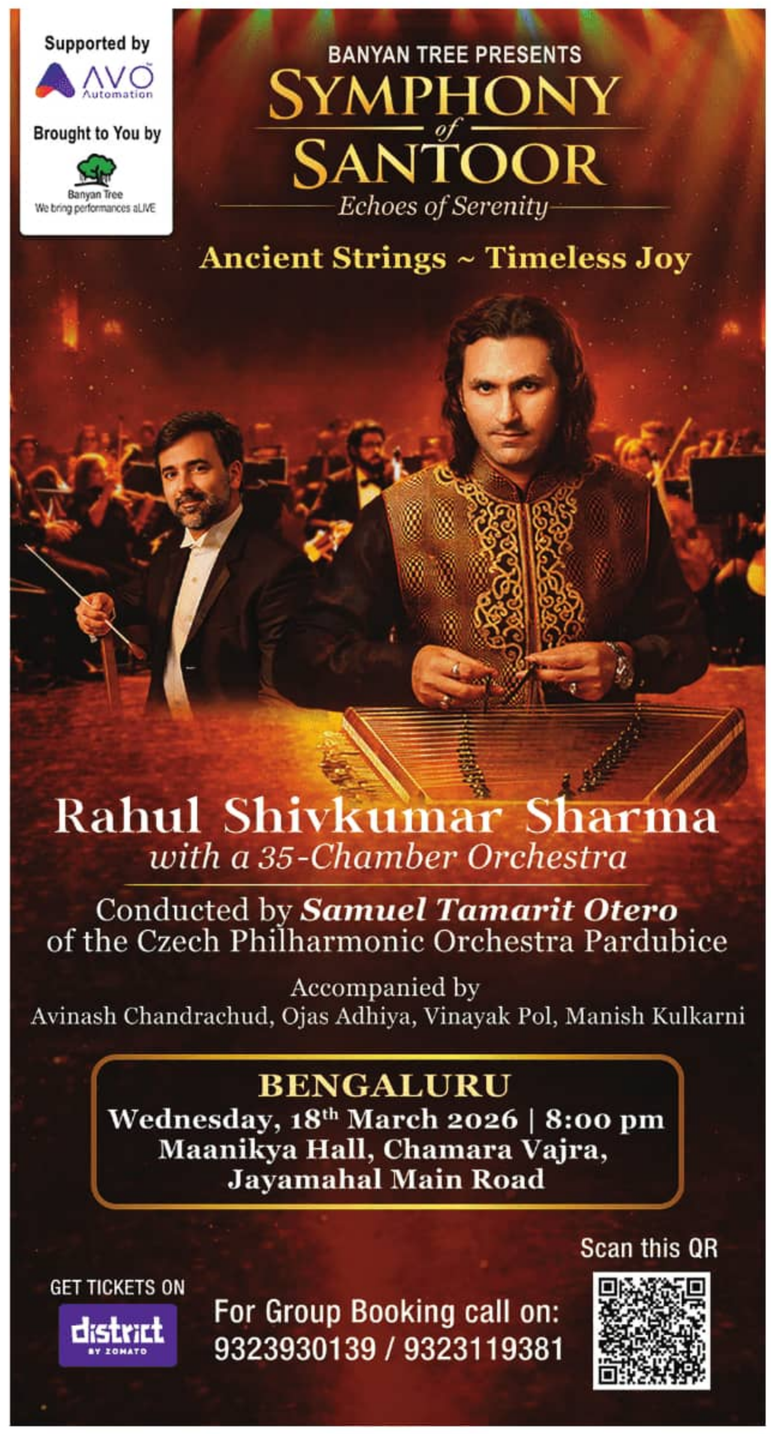
We recently published a study in the journal NPJ Complexity that suggests that, while large language model AIs excel at conversation, they often fail to align with humans when communicating uncertainty. The research focused on words of estimative probability, which include terms like "maybe," "probably" and "almost certain."

By comparing how AI models and humans map these words to numerical percentages, we uncovered significant gaps between humans and large language models. While the models do tend to agree with humans on extremes like "impossible," they diverge sharply on hedge words like "maybe." For example, a model might use the word "likely" to represent an 80 per cent probability, while a human reader assumes it means closer to 65 per cent.

This could be because humans can interpret words such as "likely" and "probable" based more on contextual cues and personal experiences. In contrast, large language models may be averaging over conflicting usages of those words in their training data, leading to divergences with human interpretations.

Our study also found that large language models are sensitive to gendered language and the specific language used for prompting. When a prompt changed from "he" to "she," the AI's probability estimates often became more rigid, reflecting biases embedded in its training data. When a prompt changed from English to Chinese, the AI's probability estimates often shifted, possibly due to differences in how people express and understand uncertainty.

(By Mayank Kejriwal, University of Southern California, The Conversation)



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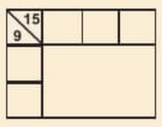
@BangaloreMirror

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

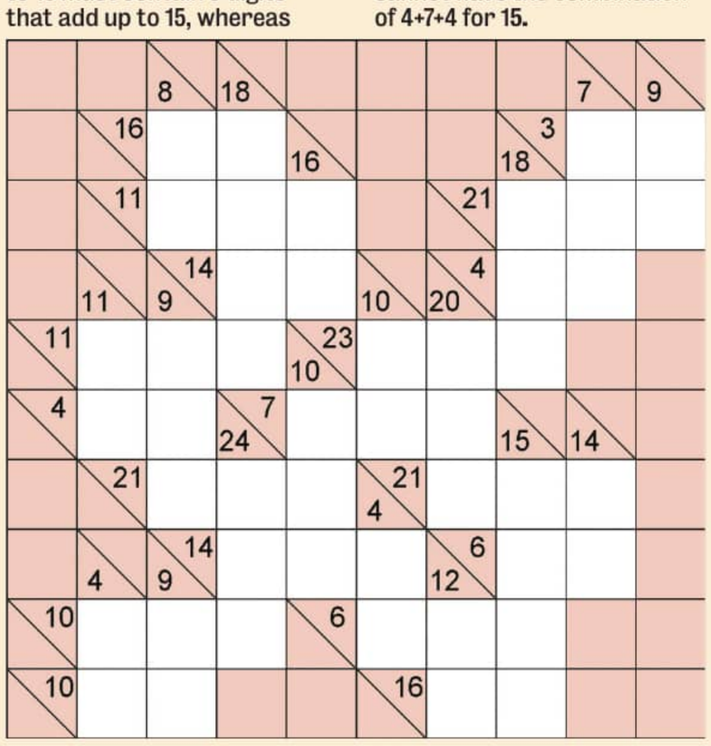
[(6^4^-1) * (6^2^2) * (6^-2^-1)] ^ 4 = ?

Kakuro

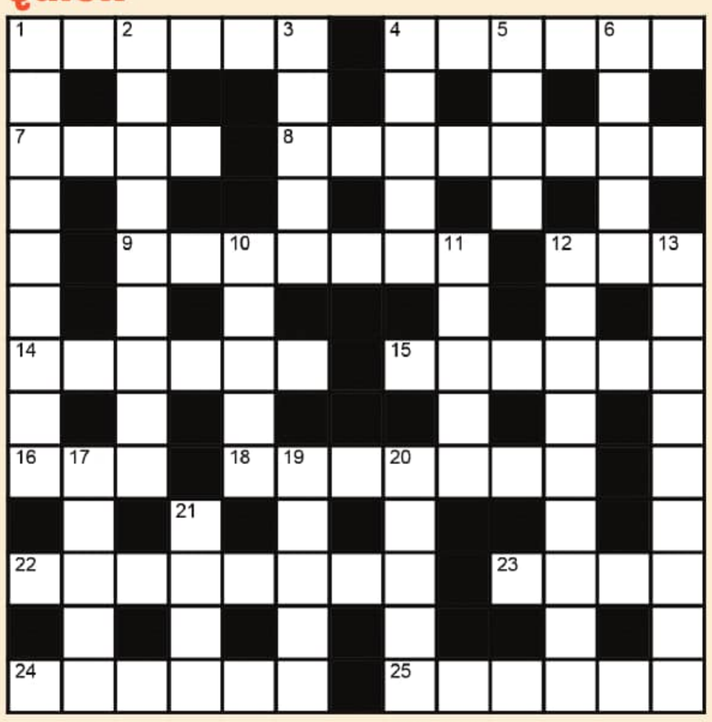
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Chewy confection (6)
4 Soldiers (6)
7 Nimble (4)
8 A sign of approval (6,2)
9 Bangalore cinema home to India's first 4k screen (7)
12 Stomach muscles (3)
14 Vagrants (6)
15 Frisking; playful leaping (6)
16 Garden tool (3)
18 Song-writer or poet (7)
22 Good enough (8)
23 Tributary of Ganges (4)
24 Task (6)
25 Ripen or mature (6)

DOWN

1 International cricket contest (4,5)
2 Happening by good luck (9)
3 Bit player (5)
4 Feel (5)
5 Globes or eyeballs (4)
6 Exactly vertical (5)
10 Venomous snake (5)
11 Middle-Easterner (5)
12 Large sea-bird (9)
13 Deliverance (9)
17 Neatness; command (5)
19 Listened to (5)
20 Satisfies or fulfils, as in, "___ the conditions"? (5)
21 ___ regia : the solvent for gold? (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: Z EQUALS H

BR VLB KZRRYQY QWON IQKLFYQ OS OY QWON; ZQ RBNE VOYSLMQY OS DRC ZLAAOBQYY, SZQ URRX ZQ YQQMY.

Linemaro

Don't tell me if you like me. Just smile for yes, or do a backflip for no.

Mindchow

Never give advice unless you have walked the walk, because anybody can talk the talk

Joke of the day

NASA is developing space taxis to shuttle astronauts to the International Space Station; and just like New York taxis, they're all going to be driven by aliens

Loop

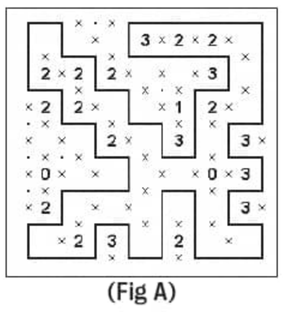
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

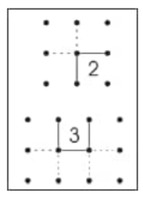
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

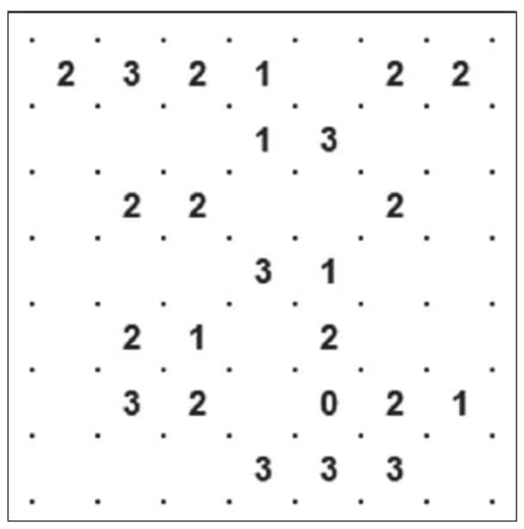
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



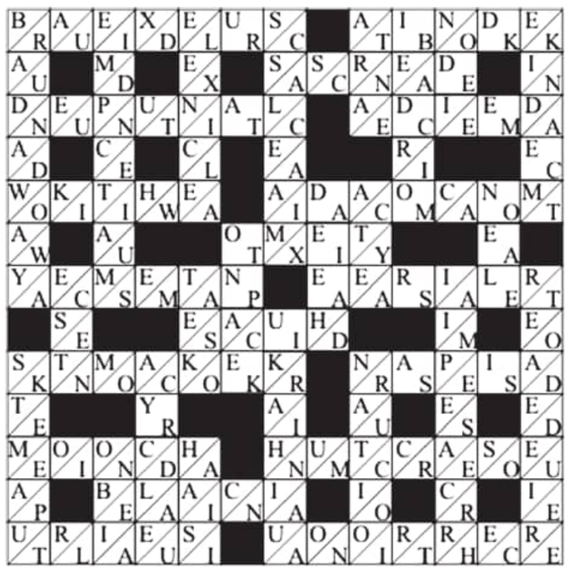
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



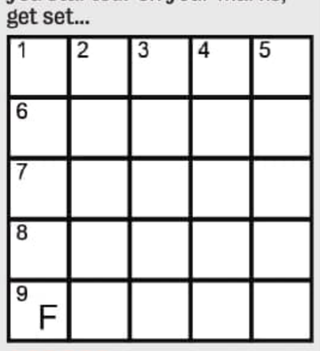
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

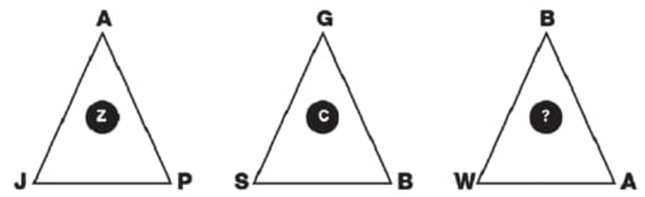
1 Asp do; 6 VE Net; 7 Co rig; 8 Lader; 9 Flu so

DOWN

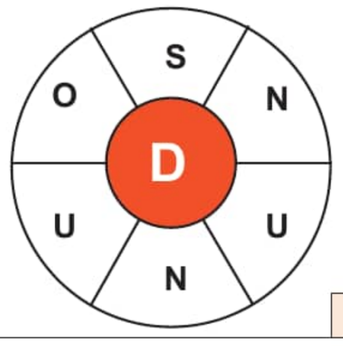
1 Faced; 2 OO Vol; 3 Prude; 4 Angle; 5 Sir ST

Mensapuzzle

Which letter goes in the middle of the third triangle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

01 Average; **02** Good; **03** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	4						8	
5				1				3
3			8		2			6
4	6		7		8		5	1
		5				4		
7	8		3		4		6	2
9			4		1			5
1				7				4
	7						1	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy

= 18

2 6 7 7

Medium

= 10

1 2 3 5

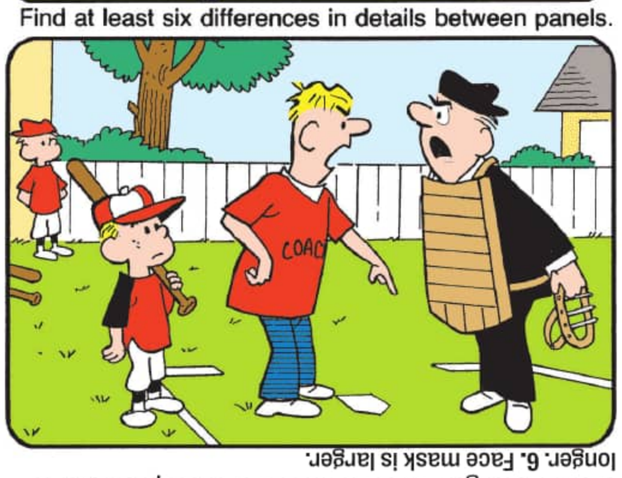
Hard

= 27

3 6 6 9

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Hand is moved. 2. Sleeve is different. 3. Shirt is longer. 4. Foot is moved. 5. Chest protector is longer. 6. Face mask is larger.

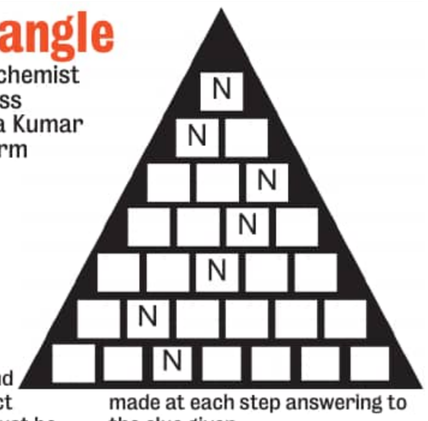
Riddler

For each group below, fill in the blanks with two words that differ only by their first letter.

1. Stop thinking over here. Go _ _ _ _ _ _ over _ _ _ _.
2. An untrained person could be killed in these woods, but there is little _ _ _ _ _ _ for a _ _ _.
3. Writing an "A" on your dish rag would make it a _ _ _ _ _ with a _ _ _ _ _.

Alpha triangle

1 Nitrogen for the chemist
2 NE on the compass
3 Nobelist Amartya Kumar
4 Trigonometric term
5 Fork features
6 Put in
7 Fiddles with

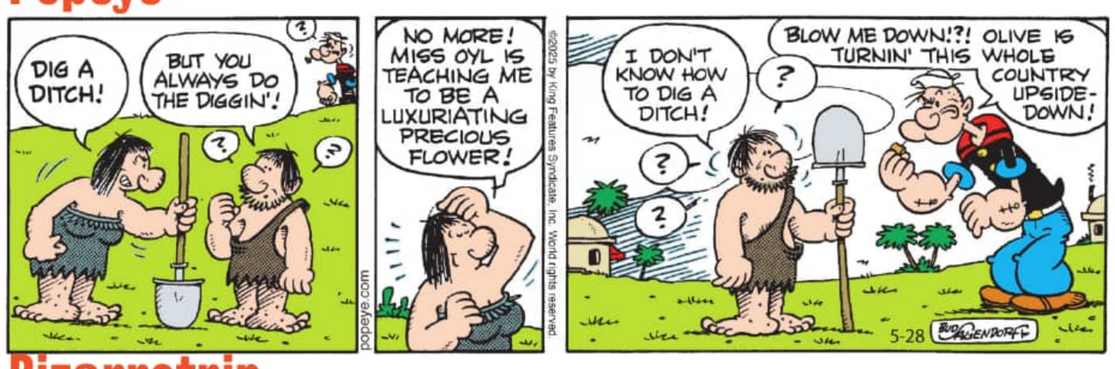


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


DIG A DITCH!
BUT YOU ALWAYS DO THE DIGGIN'!
NO MORE! MISS OYL IS TEACHING ME TO BE A LUXURIATING PRECIOUS FLOWER!
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO DIG A DITCH!
BLOW ME DOWN!?! OLIVE IS TURNIN' THIS WHOLE COUNTRY UPSIDE-DOWN!
5-28
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip

MEET THE AUTHOR
I only do signatures. If you want an inscription, you'll have to meet the ghostwriter.
Wayno & Piraro 11-17-25
©2025 BIZARRO STUDIOS
Dist. by King Features
BIZARRO.COM

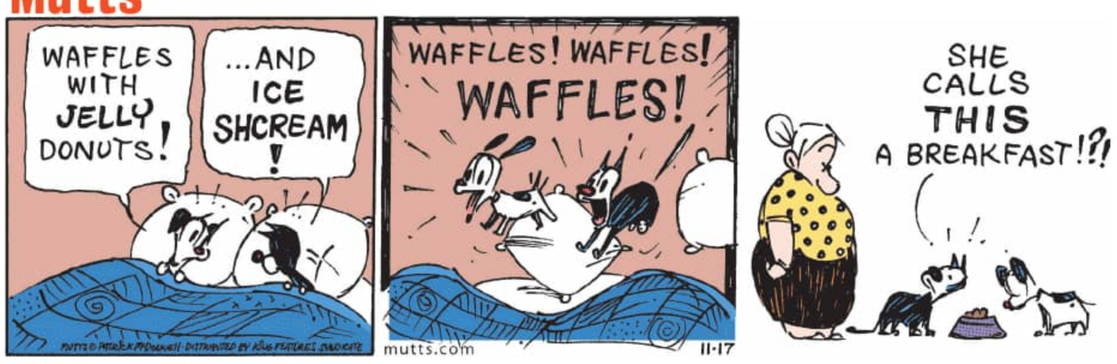
Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

LET'S MARK WHERE WE SAW ALL THE CATS TODAY.
HERE, HERE AND HERE.
HEY, IT MAKES A CIRCLE!
THAT'S WHERE WE'RE GONNA FIND THE CAT WHISPERER.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@OCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

Mutts



WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Your year ahead involves a significant focus on wellness and career. Professional life requires attention to detail and consistent effort. Love flourishes when you prioritise health and shared lifestyle goals. Domestic life is organized and peaceful. Travel for relaxation and spa retreats is highly recommended. Financial gains are linked to your productivity and specialized, unique professional skills.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

New opportunities for growth appear today, so stay alert. Your courage and enthusiasm lead toward exciting adventures. A very successful and bright future path is unfolding beautifully for you now.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

Financial gains are likely today if you trust your practical instincts. By managing resources wisely, you build a secure foundation. This support helps you achieve your long-term goals and dreams.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

Clear communication helps you build strong connections today. Sharing your thoughts openly leads to deeper understanding. Enjoy a sense of harmony in all your relationships through honest and kind dialogue.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Focus on creating a peaceful home environment today. Small improvements to your space enhance your mood. Provide a comforting sanctuary where you can truly relax and recharge your vibrant energy of your soul.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Your natural charisma attracts helpful people who support your visions. Use your influence for good. Your leadership leads to many positive changes and successful outcomes in your professional and personal life.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

Dedication to your work pays off today with recognition. Your hard work and attention to detail are valued. Pave the way for future career advancement and great personal success today.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

Balance and grace help you navigate social interactions with ease. Your ability to create harmony ensures you are surrounded by supportive people. Everyone truly appreciates your kind and gentle spirit.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

Your inner strength allows you to overcome any obstacles today. By staying focused and determined, you will achieve your goals. Emerge from challenges stronger and more confident than ever before.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

A sense of adventure leads you to exciting new places today. Embrace the unknown with an open heart. Your curiosity results in many wonderful life experiences and very happy memories.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

Practical planning ensures your long-term success today. By focusing on your goals and staying organized, you build a solid foundation. Support your future growth and personal prosperity with your diligence.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

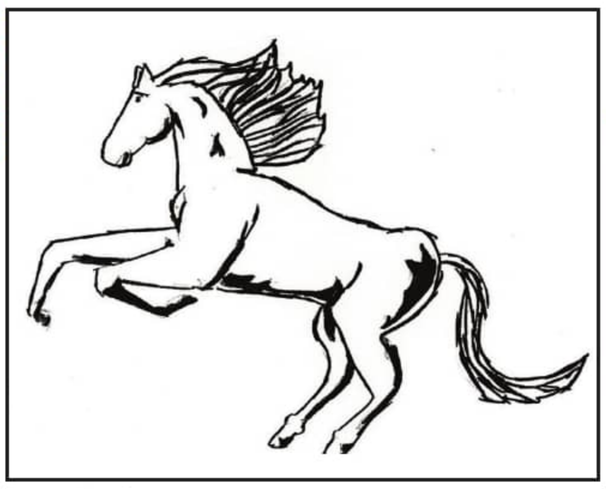
Your unique vision inspires those around you today. Share your innovative ideas with confidence. Your original perspective leads to exciting opportunities and a very successful, rewarding professional career path today.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

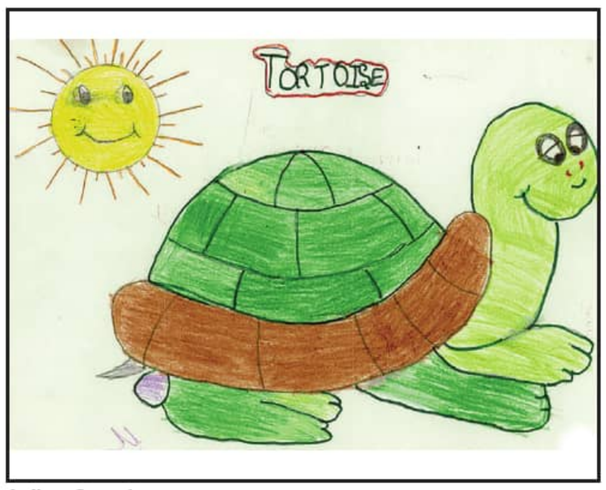
Deep intuition guides you toward meaningful connections today. Trust your heart and allow your compassionate nature to shine. Your kindness creates a ripple effect of love and happiness for everyone.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Pranav, Bengaluru



Jadhav, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M [6^(1/4) * 6^4 * 6^(-1/2)] ^ 4
[6^(15/4)] ^ 4 = 6^15 =
470 184 984 576

BULL'S EYE
sound, undo, UNSOUND

RIDDLER
1. Ponder, Yonder,
2. Danger, Ranger,
3. Towel, Vowel

FAST FIVE

F	O	U	L	S
E	V	E	N	T
C	O	R	G	I
A	L	D	E	R
D	O	P	A	S

STRIKE OUT

R	A	I	D	E	R	S		A	B	O	D	E		
U	M	X		A	C	R	E	D		N				
N	U	P	T	I	A	L		E	D	E	M	A		
A	E		L		A		I			C				
W	I	T	H	E		A	D	A	M	A	N	T		
Y	E	S	M	A	N		E	R	I	E	R			
	E		S	C	U	D			M		E			
K	N	O	C	K	E	R		R	A	P	I	D		
E		Y		A		A		E		D				
M	O	O	C	H		N	U	T	C	A	S	E		
P		B	L	I	N	I		I		C		E		
T	R	I	E	S		A	N	O	T	H	E	R		

QUICK

E	R	R	A	N	D		S	E	A	S	O	N		
	E		U		R		T			O				
A	D	E	Q	U	A	T	E		K	O	S	I		
	R		A		E			R			T			
H	O		E	R	H	Y	M	I	S	T		A		
C		T		E		Q			A		V			
T	R	A	M	P	S		G	A	M	B	O	L		
A		N		I		R			L		A			
M	U	R	V	A	S	H	I		A	B	S			
	T		R		C		S		M					
S	P	R	Y		T	H	U	M	B	S	U	P		
E		O		X		O		R		L				
T	O	F	F	E	E		T	R	O	O	P	S		

MENSA PUZZLE
L. Add the numerical values of the bottom two letters and divide by the numerical value of the top letter to give the value of the centre letter.

QUOTE UNCODE
No man chooses evil because it is evil; he only mistakes it for happiness, the good he seeks.

SUDOKU

6	4	2	5	9	3	1	8	7
5	9	8	6	1	7	2	4	3
3	1	7	8	4	2	5	9	6
4	6	9	7	2	8	3	5	1
2	3	5	1	6	9	4	7	8
7	8	1	3	5	4	9	6	2
9	2	6	4	8	1	7	3	5
1	5	3	9	7	6	8	2	4
8	7	4	2	3	5	6	1	9

ALPHA TRIANGLE
N, Ne, Sen, Sine, Tines, Insert, Tinkers.

GO FIGURE
Easy
7 + 6 - 2 + 7 = 18
Medium
2 x 3 - 1 + 5 = 10
Hard
3 - 6 + 6 x 9 = 27

LOOP

KAKURO

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SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Revenge drama unveiled

Director Gurumurthy V, popularly known as Gurumurthy Tsunami, famed for helming the Kannada film Marakastra, in which Action Queen Malashree played the protagonist, is set to release his new Kannada film Shikhandi.

The film's motion poster was unveiled by directors Jadesh Hampi and Naveen Reddy, along with producer Sanjay Gowda, at MMB Legacy on Monday.

The film is backed by Pola Praveen Kumar under the Pola Movies banner.

"Shikhandi from the Mahabharata is an inspiration for me. All of us are aware of how Shikhandi was reborn to take revenge on Bhishma Pitamah. I have emphasised the element of revenge, but the film also includes suspense, thriller, horror and comedy. I would like to thank producer Pola Praveen Kumar for agreeing to back this project as soon as I completed narrating the script to him," said Gurumurthy.

Pola Praveen Kumar said he supported the film for its strong script and Gurumurthy's dedication.

Lead actor Yuvaraj Gowda, from Mysuru, said he was delighted with the title and is making his Sandalwood debut as a protagonist.

Devasasya wraps up

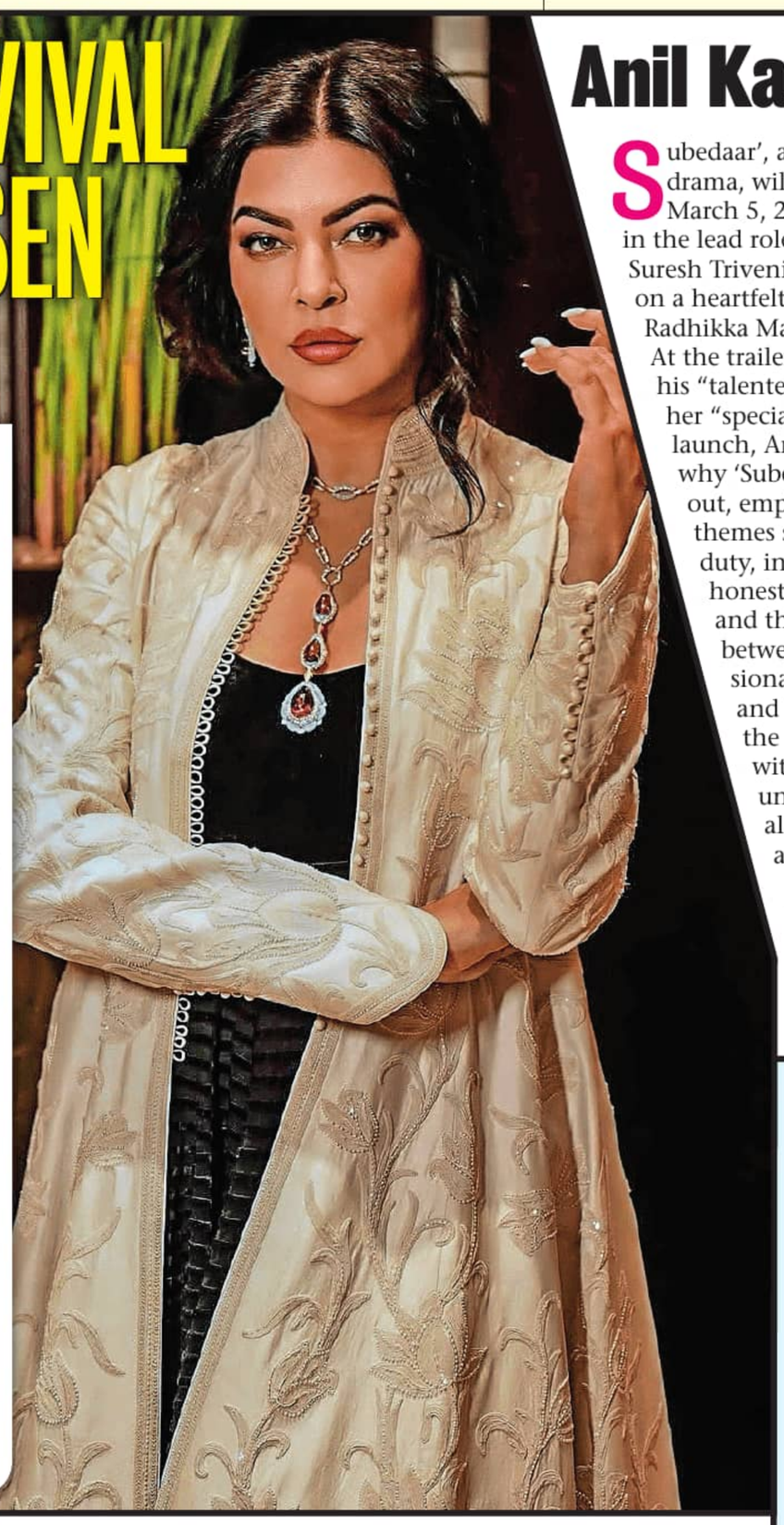
The filming of the multilingual film Devasasya was completed on Monday. The final scene was shot at Puttanna Kanagal Studio on Magadi Road.

The film revolves around the Siddi community living in a forest near Sirsi. It is helmed by Karthik Bhat, while M Hegde has backed it under the Anantha Films banner. The film is expected to be released in five languages.

Set in 1985, the film features Selvin Desai from the Siddi community in a pivotal role, with the director training him for two years. It also stars Ahan Gowda, Bimbika J Rao, Prakash Belawadi, Pramod Shetty, Ayyappa Sharma, Manjunatha Hegde and Geetha Siddi, alongside 150 Siddi members. The shoot spanned 83 days.Producer Ananthamurthy Hegde said Devasasya, which went on floors in March 2025, was largely shot in Uttara Kannada with nearly 200 artistes. Calling it a passion project, he said the film centres on a rare forest plant, took three years of scripting, and required a specially constructed village set. Director Karthik Bhat said the film marks his directorial debut. He previously wrote for Kannada films and TV serials.

STRENGTH, SURVIVAL AND SUSHMITA SEN

Actress celebrates resilience, recovery and renewed fitness focus



Sushmita Sen recently inspired fans by uploading a powerful video on Instagram to celebrate her latest fitness achievement. The actress was seen pushing her limits in the gym, showing off her sculpted abs, taking a swim and embracing a fit lifestyle, all underscored by her motivational message, "No excuses, just results." In her caption, Sen wrote, "Thank you, God!!! #3years I love you guys!!! #duggadugga," celebrating three years since she survived a heart attack.

Sushmita Sen reflects on her health journey

Sen has often spoken about the challenges she has faced in life. Nearly three years after her heart attack, the actress remains deeply committed to her well-being. In a past conversation with NDTV, she opened up about the 2023 health scare, saying it "was meant to happen", while emphasising that even consistent fitness routines cannot always override genetics.

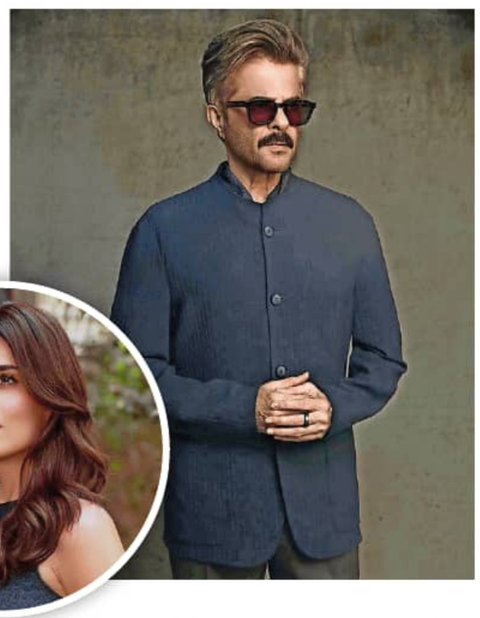
"Both my parents have heart issues. The fact that I survived and healed quickly is a huge blessing," she added. Sen shared that her post-heart attack fitness routine has been a slow and steady process. She began with basic warm-ups, stretches and light floor workouts and has now progressed to weight training. While she refrains from running, she includes brisk walking in her routine, focusing on keeping every movement dynamic.

"You must listen to your body and what it allows on a given day," she emphasised.

Sushmita Sen's last appearance

Sushmita Sen was last seen in Aarya 3, which earned an International Emmy nomination for Best Drama. She resumed shooting intense action scenes just a month after her heart attack, calling the experience "cathartic" and a new beginning. —ETimes

Anil Kapoor praises Radhikka



Subedaar', an upcoming Hindi action drama, will premiere on OTT on March 5, 2026. Anil Kapoor stars in the lead role under the direction of Suresh Triveni, with the story centring on a heartfelt father-daughter bond. Radhikka Madan plays his daughter. At the trailer launch, Anil praised his "talented" co-star, calling her "special". At the trailer launch, Anil explained why 'Subedaar' stands out, emphasising themes such as duty, integrity, honesty, hard work, and the tension between professional obligations and family. He described the father-daughter dynamic with Radhikka Madan as uniquely memorable, while also praising the music, cast and crew.

He said the father-daughter bond forms the heart of the film, adding that working with Radhikka was incredible and calling her truly special, promising audiences would see it on screen.

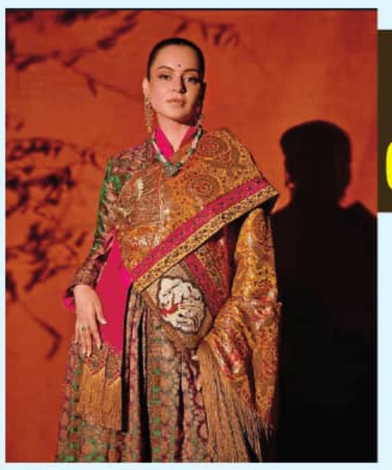
Kapoor also commended Radhikka's dedication, saying: "I was constantly challenged by her and what she brought to the scenes. They were so beautiful. The film has so much soul and is not just an action drama. It has action, but it also has many layers. The cinematic brilliance of the film is what I feel will appeal to audiences." —ETimes

Kajol vs the AI age

The Delhi High Court has granted interim relief to actor Kajol, protecting her personality and publicity rights. In an order dated February 20, Justice Jyoti Singh restrained several entities from using her name, image, voice or likeness without prior authorisation.

Kajol filed a commercial suit against e-commerce portals and AI-based platforms, including Kash Collective, Pinkswag, Nazrrco, Amazon, Meta Platforms Inc., YouTube, SpicyChat.ai and Talkie-ai.com. She alleged that the defendants were selling merchandise bearing her name and photographs, creating AI-generated content and chatbots replicating her persona, and hosting morphed and pornographic material linked to her identity.

The Court noted she holds trademark rights over "KAJOL" and enjoys statutory and common law protection. Finding a prima facie case, it held denial of relief would cause irreparable harm. The order bans unauthorised use of her identity, including deepfakes, and directs removal within 72 hours. Hearing on April 23, 2026. —ETimes



Kangana shares candid life lessons

Kangana Ranaut, known for being vocal about her opinions, recently shared a candid message on social media urging people to be mindful of the company they keep. In her post, she cautioned followers to "stay away from zombies", describing them as individuals who lack ambition and emotional awareness.

Prefacing her thoughts with a disclaimer, Kangana wrote: "I don't usually give gyan, but just in case you need to read this... 1. No matter how smart or successful you are, if you need an upgrade in life, look for those who are smarter than you and sincerely admire them. If possible, seek their company." She cautioned against people who undermine growth, advising others to avoid those who resent success or kindness and not to expect extraordinary behaviour from ordinary people.

Concluding her note in a reflective tone, she added: "3. Lastly, own your story. Don't see yourself through others' eyes. Look at yourself as if you were your own child and honestly ask what you truly desire for yourself. Be kind to yourself, there is a reason for your existence; you are meaningful. Hare Krishna." —ETimes